

An Ebenezer Stone (1 Samuel 7:1-17)

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An Ebenezer Stone (1 Samuel 7:1-17)

We live in an area of the country that is dotted with monuments. Granite statues of this person or that. Engraved Stones that read this regiment defeated that regiment at this place. These are stones that are to cause us on our journey through life to stop and reflect on our history. We were driving down to camp meeting a few weeks ago on 75 and passed that place. That place where in 1994 God saved me and although there is no granite stone or engraved monument my heart leaped back into history where the battle of my heart was won by the Lord Jesus. But there have been other places, of remembrance ^{places} of repentance + restoration ^{intro} and renewal that due

I. The Turning of Their Desires - Previous to this moment, God's people had gone into wickedness led by the sons of Eli. The ark had been taken which was a judgment of disgrace upon them. The ark eventually returned, but taken lightly, our 50k kills, bringing A. A Remorse Exhibited vs 2 - After all the death, loss, destruction, and disgrace the ark was placed properly in a specific home. The events that had taken place began to have an affect on the people. The ark was an emblem of their relationship to God. The realization of the level that they had sunk to, began to dawn on them. There began to be remorse a Godly sorrow the heart

B. A Removal Exercised vs 3+4-5 Samuel takes a lamenting people and doesn't lament blast them with the obvious, but points them toward making things right with God. IT in 4:2. He said if you want to be right w/ God there are some things that are going to have to be removed. There are some idols that are going to have to go. There are some hearts that are going to have to be cleaned. There are some hands to be ^{surrendered} to

C. A Repentance Expressed vs 5+6- Come down to Mizpah. This was near where the enemy. This is a public repentance that was sure to get the enemy's attention. Repentance is not an easy way out, no repentance, you coming down to the altar to make things right with the Lord is sure to draw out the hiss of the enemy. But they didn't care who saw it, they sacrificed some things of the flesh. ^{admission going} There was some ^{admission} ^{going}

II. The Trial of Their Dependence Look out when you start getting right w/ God. The devil don't like it, it ain't always a cake walk to be right with God. Faith ^{possessed} will be faith tested. As soon as they turned to God

A. A Returning Encroachment vs 7- You see in those years of idolatry and sin gods people had lost some ground. The enemy came in and began to just squall down on what wasn't theirs to begin with. The Philistines hear the sound of renewal and

Intro) ...that I have marked in my mind never to be forgotten. Like so many other places in the word of God we see a pattern for our own lives in the life of the children of Israel. A pattern of repentance toward God, return to God, reliance on God and remembrance of God that can be easily applied to our lives..

- 1) ...godly sorrow, the front end of repentance. How often does God us things to grab our attention and remind is of a sinking spiritual condition, a dusty Bible, a questioning child, a church sign. Things that generate a remorse in hearts and cause us to ask, how did I end up here.
- 2) 2 Timothy 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove (***show them their wrong***), rebuke (***tell them how bad their wrong is***), exhort (***how to make their wrong right***) with all longsuffering and doctrine.
- 3) ...as soon as they turned to God, the enemy started rattling swords.

decided to put a stop to this right then and there and might as well take a little bit more of their land to boot while they at it.

B. A Reliance Embraced vs 8-10a - It's good to have a healthy fear of the enemy. The children of Israel were no match for Philistines. Just like you are no match for the Devil on your own strength. The only confidence we can carry into the battle is "unto the Lord Our God" vs 9 "Suckling lamb" reminding them of God's deliverance out of the bondage of Egypt land. The same God that delivered in past v deliver

C. A Routed Enemy vs 10b-11 - The enemy was approaching as they were worshiping. Boy there's a lesson there. When we focus our attention on God and get our eyes off the enemy, God will fight our battles. What was suppose to be a surprise attack became a sobering annihilation. A miraculous win that could only be attributed to the Ability of God!

III. The Triumph of Their Deity - There is a radio program called Triumph thru trust, that's exactly what we see here, they relied on the Lord and he routed their enemy. Proverbs 3:5-6 Trust the Lord w/ all thine

A. A Remembrance Entrenched (vs. 12) God had miraculously won the battle for his people. then chased them clear down to Bethcar

In order to remember such a momentous victory Samuel entrenches a memory by stone in the ground. Ebenezer = A Stone of Help. Said Hitherto... "It is the Lord that has brought us back to this place. It wasn't Ashdod, Tamar, Babel or Moab that brought us victory. He's the one that B. A Restoration Experienced (Vs 13-14)

The ground that had been lost to the enemy was regained. The children of Israel were restored back unto the land which they had been promised. The youth group at Temple used to sing "We'd went to the enemy camp and took back what they stole from me. Through the victory that is gained by removal + repentance, we can

C. A Rule Enforced (Vs 15-17) - Here we see that Samuel lead the people, instructed the people of God in years of victory and blessing. The Law of God was no longer laid aside but was restored by Samuel and a willing people. Also the altar of God was restored. This victory just wasn't a one time thing, but the worship of God was restored as a practice

IV. Closing. Do you have any Ebenezers? Do you have any markers reminders of how God has kept his word when we have turned our hearts toward Him? Do you need to meet Him at Mizpah

1) He's the one that brought the victory. When their desire was turned toward the Lord alone and away from idols, God brought victory as never before.

2) ...repentance, we can once again regain that peace that has been pillaged by the enemy, that growth that has been stunted by the enemy, that joy that has been robbed by the enemy!

3) ...need to meet him at Mizpeh? My be you have and the faith that you have expressed there has come under attack: "Cease not to cry unto the Lord our God for us" Remind us of His saving blood and past deliverance by it.